



5 Tips for Successful Facebook Live Videos



by Liam Corcoran

We look at five simple ways that publishers can make sure that their Facebook Live Videos make a mark every time.

When [we asked 11 social media editors and experts](#) for their predictions around what publishers should look out for on social media in 2016, live video on Facebook was a popular choice.

“2016 will see publishers trying to integrate live video content into their social channels... publishers will need to test and learn what works in the live social video world to drive engagement and grow its audience,” said The Next Web’s Matt Navarra.

Now that Facebook have extended the feature [to all users](#), not just public profiles, there’s a sense that Live Video in news feeds will become a very familiar sight.

As publishers integrate Live Video into their strategies, we’re seeing more and more Live Videos popping up in Spike.

Both CNN and BBC News have been using the streams in similar ways. CNN have had experts answer questions on news stories of the day, while BBC News have had a number of clips where TV anchors interview BBC reporters about different stories.



Meanwhile, the Wall Street Journal is also dipping its toes into the Live experience - a stream of two of their political staff [discussing the 2016 Iowa caucus](#) was one of their most engaged videos in January. We've also noticed lots of regional US news sites using Live Video as a means of covering local stories on the ground, with weather-related topics proving particularly popular.

Overall however, many publishers have been slow to get into Live Videos, and we've yet to see a huge uptake of the feature from regular publishers.

However, as the '[Drummond Puddle Watch](#)' showed us earlier in 2016, there's plenty of appetite for even the most inane of live stream subjects.

Here are our five tips for making the best Facebook Live Videos.

1. Make the Video Long Enough to Stick

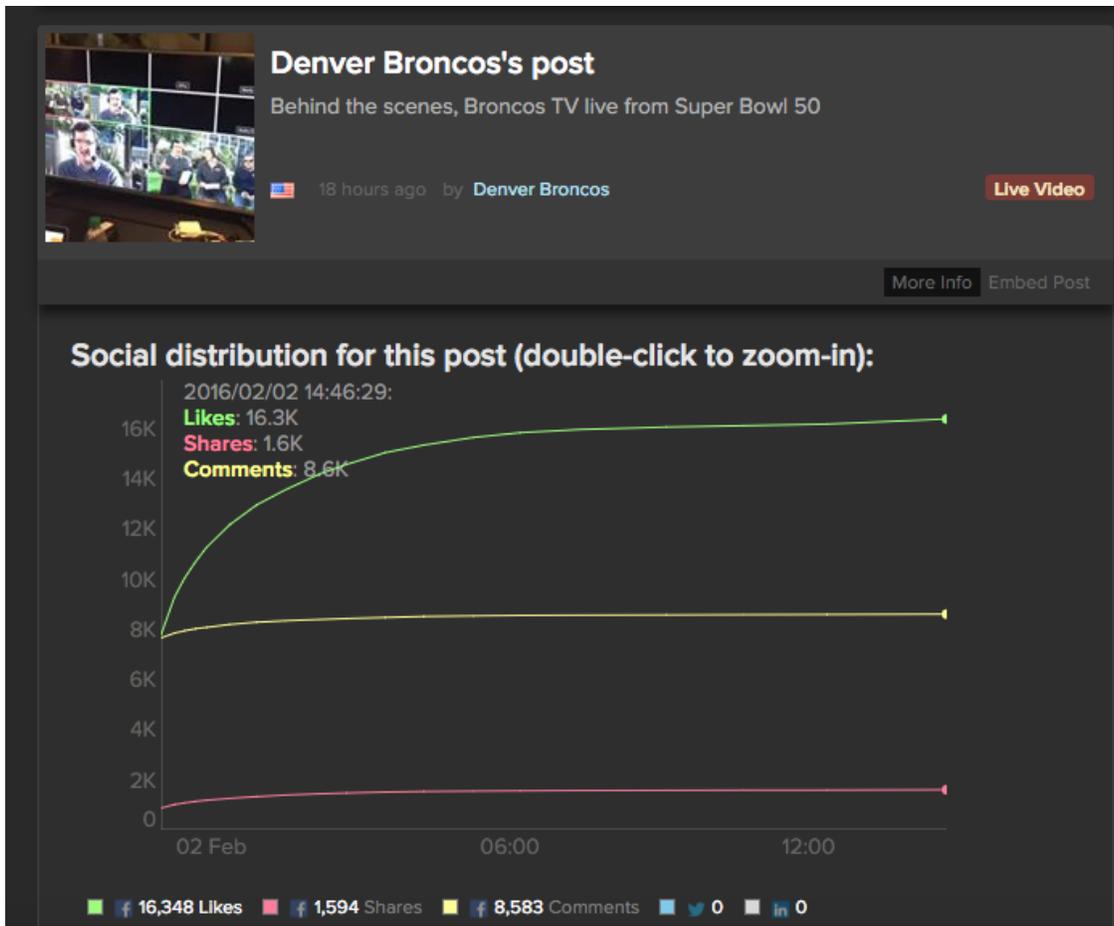
Here's the thing with Live Video - everything that we already know about what makes for successful native video on Facebook doesn't exactly apply. One of the most obvious differences lies with the length of each clip.

As we've previously noted on [the NewsWhip blog](#), some of the most successful live videos are well under 60 seconds long. For Live Video, that rule goes out the window.

The longer the broadcast, the more people that can join in the stream, and spread it on to their friends.

Facebook themselves [recommend](#) that the videos "go live for at least 5 minutes", and many publishers and public figures have well exceeded that time limit recently.

2. Show Something Genuinely Interesting



A Denver Broncos Facebook Live Video performing strongly in Spike

When streaming live, it can be tough to get the balance right between being interesting and staying live for long enough to build an audience.

To help things, ensure that things are set up properly once you decide to start streaming. Bad WiFi connections and wildly careening camera angles don't make for the best viewer experience, nor do long awkward pauses.

Elsewhere, we noted in our five tips for native video that 'talking heads' didn't feature much in the most shared videos. But so far, talking heads often seem to be the essence of Live Videos' appeal.

Again, that's a difference with native videos.

Celebrity pages have a head start when it comes to gathering an audience for their live streams - their names are often enough to guarantee a rapt audience, even if it's objectively boring footage.

Publishers need to put in a little more effort to ensure that what they're producing hits the target audience.

BBC and CNN have seen decent engagement on videos that address the topics of the day. People browsing their news feeds will respond to stories that their friends are sharing in the news feed that day. Similarly, social signal platforms like [Spike](#) can help social media editors figure out what their audience is talking about in real time.

3. Engage with Viewers

While there's a stream in progress, reacting to viewers should be a priority.

A social media team should be on hand to pick out the best questions and comments for mention, and to see how people are reacting the different parts of the stream, to try and learn what content works best.

BBC News Social Media Editor Mark Frankel [told us](#) that the quality of comments that their viewers post during streams is very high.

"We've already determined that we will get a very engaged audience, from right across the world, and many of them are asking questions and raising comments that we can use directly in our news output. So we can be answering them directly on the stream itself, but we can also surface the best of those contributions for later programmes," said Mark.

4. Promote the Stream Across Platforms

Telling the rest of your social communities that a live stream is about to start is always a good idea.

For most mobile viewers, it should be a simple switch between apps. Publishers in particular can harness the real-time energy of Twitter here by using trending hashtags to get even further with their message.



5. Encourage Viewers to Subscribe and Engage

Always key to ensuring you'll have viewers next time, remind viewers to subscribe to your feed to get future updates.

Likewise, encouraging viewers to leave comments, particularly in the form of suggestions and questions, ensures that the live video ranks higher in news feeds, and ensures that there's a steady stream of questions to work with on the stream itself.

[See the latest trending Live videos in Spike](#)